The Social Context of Ambition: A Study of High-School Seniors in Los Angeles. by Ralph H. Turner
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reveals patterns of relationship that are obscured in simpler presentations of the data. For example, Williams found that the likelihood and the effects of "contact," a critical variable in the study of attitude change, are functions of opportunity, socioeconomic status, tendencies toward authoritarianism, and other factors. Because cross-tabulation brings significant influences into focus, the material is useful for general theory, compensating for its lack of "timeliness" in a field changing as rapidly as is intergroup relations.

On the third level, Williams deals with the significance of his findings for the way complex societies function and change. Chapter 10, "Structures and Processes in Multigroup Society," is in my judgment the most important part of the book. Perhaps its thesis can be suggested in this statement: "A multigroup society can continue to operate as a system with a low degree of consensus in some respects if it is a society with high mutual advantage, effective means of communication, and some minimal unitary exercise of order-maintaining power. It will be driven more and more toward reliance upon power, the less consensus there is concerning the distribution of rewards and concerning the basic rules for settling conflicts." To understand whether the "strangers next door" will remain strangers, and if they do, the extent to which this will disrupt social process, requires study of the social structures within which interaction takes place. Williams does not neglect personality variables, but they occupy a less important place in his interpretation than structural variables.

Altogether, this book keeps the study of ethnic relations—seen from the perspective of both majority and minority—within the framework of a theory of society. It is likely to serve as a source of both data and interpretation for many years to come.

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The Social Context of Ambition: A Study of High-School Seniors in Los Angeles. By Ralph H. Turner. San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1964. xi, 269 pp. $6.00.

This volume is a comprehensive report of a field study of some cherished values in American society: ambition, aspiration, self-realization, and the individual's opportunity to "get ahead" in life. Viewed broadly, three dimensions of the social system are integrated: cultural values, the personality system of the individual, and the social structure of our society. More particularly, "The present investigation is an effort to shed light on the social setting in which ambition is nurtured and in which it is translated into concrete steps in mobility."

To explore fully the social context in which ambition originates, develops, and works itself out in the behavior of individuals would require a prospective longitudinal study extending over many years. An alternate study design is the large-scale cross-sectional one that Turner used in this research. His subjects were high school seniors enrolled in nine high schools in Los Angeles and one in Beverly Hills. The schools were selected so that a broad range of socioeconomic status would be represented among the students. Data were collected by a self-administered schedule given to each student during school hours in classes under the supervision of Turner and his research assistant. (A copy of the 16-page schedule is included.) The schedule was pretested on seniors attending high schools not included in the final study. Statistical procedures were utilized to reduce the data to a meaningful form.

The social contexts of ambition, as evidenced in youths who are in the last year of high school, encompass the stratification system operative in Los Angeles, the family of orientation, the neighborhood, the youth subculture within the high school and outside it, in the larger society, sex, intelligence, and the individual's conception of himself, his place in society, and his expected future roles in life. Each facet of the complex problem of ambition in a stratified society is examined carefully, theoretical propositions are tested with relevant data, and conclusions are drawn. Each chapter has an excellent summary of the issues examined therein.

The statistical results are summarized in 46 tables. Each table presents a definite segment of the research in a concise and clear manner. The statistical analysis and presentation were done in an impressively workmanlike manner, but this is only part of the book. The better part is the lucid way in which Turner presents the conceptual framework of the research problem. Statistical data are then examined to determine whether a particular theoretical proposition is tenable. The methods of analysis and the relevant concepts are models of cogency and lucidity.

In the final chapter, "Conclusions and Implications," Turner examines the theoretical issues in relation to the data and tries to account for the frequent disparities between what sociological theory would lead the researcher to expect and what the data reveal. The incongruity between what theory indicates and what the data reveal in this study may be attributable to the research design; it may also be traced to the glib way in which some sociologists with preten-

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tions to omniscience have formulated theory. The implications of these paradoxes for the future of theory and research into social stratification and ambition are discussed in considerable detail. A book of this stature is important to field researchers and theorists, alike, if they will only read it with care.

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Social Change and Prejudice: Including Dynamics of Prejudice By BRUNO BETTELHEIM and MORRIS JANOWITZ. London and New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, Collier-Macmillan Ltd. 1964. 337 pp. $5.95.

Hostility is often a dominant feature of relations among ethnic groups, but the quantity and quality of its expression varies considerably. A major preoccupation of behavioral scientists since World War II has been to understand the conditions under which these variable forms and quantities emerge. This reissue of the 1950 book, *The Dynamics of Prejudice,* with a new 95-page introduction, under the title *Social Change and Prejudice,* is an indication of the continuing interest in the problem.

Has the amount of prejudice and discrimination against Negroes and Jews in the U.S. changed significantly in the last 15 years, the authors ask, and if so, how can this best be accounted for? To the first question, they reply that "there are convincing data to support the proposition that since 1945, for the nation as a whole, there has been a decline in the average or over-all level of anti-Jewish and anti-Negro attitudes. But it cannot be asserted that there has been a similar marked decline in the percentage of persons with 'hard core' extremist attitudes toward these minorities."

The single most important piece of evidence cited is the drastic shift, from 1940 to 1959, in the percentage of the population—from 46 to 12 per cent!—who answer "yes" to the question "Have you heard any criticism or talk against the Jews in the last six months?" Those who are persuaded that anti-Semitism is deep and ubiquitous in America are not likely to place much confidence in a trend report based on that question. But the change in responses to that question cannot be ignored, for it may reflect, as the authors suggest, a substantial growth in democratic social controls and in the democratic content of socialization, both of youth and adults, since World War II.

Similar indications are given by the changes and stabilities in attitudes toward Negroes over the last 15 years. Virtually the same percentage said in 1956, as they did in 1944, that "most U.S. Negroes are treated fairly," but the proportions, nationally, who favor school desegregation, who think Negroes are as intelligent as whites, and who would be willing to live on the same block with a Negro have increased substantially. The possible influence of the 1954 Court decision, Civil Rights Legislation, changes in school curricula, and, in general, the mobilization of sentiments to accord with the law, are all suggested by these findings.

I have cited these few materials—space permits no more—to indicate how likely it is that students of ethnic prejudice and discrimination will be intrigued, tantalized, stimulated, and frustrated by the author's all-too-brief assessment of research into prejudice in the last 15 years. This is an intelligent but unsatisfying document. For while the authors know the crucial questions to ask, they do not explore them as adequately as one knows they can. Some of the queries they raise are the following: Have the contents of stereotypes changed? How adequately do the ordinary sociological variables of age and class explain changes? Have the social structural elements relevant to ethnic relations altered significantly? What role does education play? In what ways does mobility, moderate and extreme, up and down, enter the picture? What do recent developments in ego psychology, as against traditional psychoanalysis contribute to our understanding? Does degree and intimacy of contact help reduce prejudice? Where and how? Or, why not? Is there any ground for new credence in the "authoritarianism" hypothesis?

I personally found most rewarding the authors' rejection of personality differences as a satisfactory account of prejudice; their insistence on the relevance of the social milieu; their strong assertion of the validity and importance of the study of attitudes; their emphasis on the possibility of adult re-socialization; and, above all, their sensitivity to the importance of social controls—mass media, schools, government agencies, laws, and the like—in reshaping the attitudinal ambience from which we all selectively cull what suits us most.

MELVIN TUMIN
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The Destiny of Civilization. By RADHAKAMAL MUKERJEE. New York: Asia Publishing House, 1964. ix, 233 pp. $7.50.

Is there, could there possibly be, any other social scientist today whose published work embraces the diversity of theme and problem, the range of data and concept, not to emphasize the bulk of scholarly investigation contained in the more than 30 books and untold number of articles written by Radhakamal Mukerjee? One

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